

# *Park and Recreation Commission*

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Andrew Cota, Chairman

Beverly Moran  
James Benanto  
Ronald Sill  
John Monahan  
James Butler Sr.  
Bruce Sill

## **Minutes**

(meeting recorded)

Monthly meeting: Tuesday, October 11, 2016, 2016 in City Hall.

Meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m.

By roll call, members present: Andrew Cota, Beverly Moran, James Butler Sr., James Benanto and Bruce Sill. Ronald Sill arrived at 7:45 pm. John Monahan was excused.

Parks and Recreation Director Dennis O'Connell was present. Athletic Director was excused.

### **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA:**

Motion made by James Butler Sr. and second by Bruce Sill. Move to accept the agenda, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion made by James Benanto and second by James Butler Sr. Move to accept the minutes of August 8, 2016, as written. Motion carried with Beverly Moran and Bruce Sill abstaining.

### **PUBLIC PORTION:**

No one came forward to speak.

### **CORRESPONDENCES:**

The Chair noted an email received from the Mayor's office advising that a Baseball Field Relocation Committee and a Field Construction Committee will be formed to move forward the Football Field Turf project after being rewarded the state funding from the Bonding Commission.

### **DIRECTOR REPORTS:**

**Parks & Recreation Director's Report:** Mr. O'Connell reported that Pop Warner has only one more home game to play. The field is certainly showing wear by this time in the season. The conditions are worsened due to the fact the High School football team is practicing on the field. Mr. O'Connell has spoken to the Athletic Director requesting that the field be used for game play only but they continue practicing. Members suggested that the Superintendent be advised of this overuse but Mr. O'Connell said he would first approach the Athletic Director again. It was noted that during Senior week, the soccer teams will also be playing their games at the Ryan Field Complex.

Motion made by James Benanto and second by Bruce Sill. Move to have the Parks and Recreation Director communicate in writing to the Athletic Director requesting that the football field at Ryan Field Complex be utilized for game play only and no further practice time is allowed. Further, the Parks and Recreation Commission can not guarantee the condition of the field for future play due to practice already on the field. The letter should be copied to the Mayor and the Superintendent of Schools. Motion carried unanimously.

Boys Youth Basketball registration will be starting on October 19<sup>th</sup>. The girl's program will continue as a travel league with Ansonia. Mr. O'Connell noted that there is always a need for volunteer coaches for the program.

At Witek Park, the soccer programs are in their final weeks. The field looks great. Mr. O'Connell praised the work done by the private contractor for the field restoration and noted that the contractor is in place because of the stipulations set by the Derby Inland Wetlands Agency at the time of approval of the fields. This Sunday is the 20<sup>th</sup> reunion for the first girl's soccer team to play in Derby.

Mr. O'Connell noted that in conjunction with the schools, the Football field house, the Derby Veteran's Community Center and the Little League field house were decontaminated for possible exposure to the hand, foot and mouth disease currently in the school system. This was a city-wide precautionary action. Mr. O'Connell will be exploring assistance in reimbursing this unexpected expense.

As noted in the correspondence, the Mayor is forming committees to oversee the Ryan Field Complex change to artificial turf football field, an eight lane rubberized track, replacement of the field house and relocation of the baseball field. Members questioned how the Parks and Recreation Commission will be involved in this process or will this be overseen by the Superintendent of Schools and the City. The members felt it important that the Parks and Recreation Commission has a strong voice in the process. As with past planning, each field is intensely used by the programs and any changes in the current structure impacts all programs. To move a field is very complex due to the intense use of the fields and the limited overall space available for recreation and athletic programs. The artificial turf will greatly enhance the use of the football field and has been requested for decades. Members felt it important to have Athletic Director attendance at the Parks and Recreation Commission meetings. Communication between both directors is vital to work through the upcoming months and all the changes.

Mr. Benanto noted that the field construction will likely disrupt game scheduling. He encouraged the programs to be exploring alternative fields in the adjoining communities. Having been through the process, he indicated that preplanning is important and reaching out to the other towns early in the process is vital. Certainly, construction may go completely as planned but if not, it is good to have options available.

**High School Athletic Director's Report:** No one was present this evening.

**NEW or OTHER BUSINESS:**

Nothing further was presented.

Motion by Beverly Moran and second by James Butler Sr. Move to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully prepared,

*Karen Kemmesies*

Karen Kemmesies, secretary

*These minutes are subject to the Commission's approval at their next scheduled meeting.*